



WHAT IS SCHOOL TO WORK?

Every year more than one million teens in our country start high school. But far too many don't graduate. Too many students just don't see the relevance of school. Many drop out. Many who stay in school have undecided or unrealistic career plans. Seldom do young people leaving school, even with a diploma, have the training and skills necessary to connect with anything but minimum-wage, dead-end jobs.

The School To Work Opportunities Act of 1994 provides seed money to States and local partnerships of business, labor, government, education and community organizations to develop School To Work systems that provide students with:

Relevant education, allowing students to explore different careers, see what skills are required in that field of work and understand the importance of their school work.

Opportunities to develop career-specific skills through work-based experiences such as internships, mentoring and specialized job training programs.

Ways to integrate classroom and on-the-job instruction to maintain the connection between school and work.

There is no single answer to the question "What is School To Work?" It is different for every community. School To Work can include many existing job training programs like Workforce Compact, Coop, Tech Prep and Youth Fair Chance. It can also include new programs developed by local partnerships, such as youth apprenticeship, job shadowing, mentoring, career academics and school-sponsored enterprises. The shape of the School To Work system will depend on the vision and employer/school partnerships developed in each community.

The Arizona School To Work System

Arizona's School To Work system is an evolving network of business/school partnerships that integrates work and learning in new ways. It is designed to give all of Arizona's youth a better chance at a quality life, and to provide employers with a larger pool of higher skilled workers. Through on-the-job experience, an integrated curriculum and career awareness, students leave school prepared for the worlds of work and higher education.

For more information on School To Work activities in your area, call the Cochise County Consortium of School To Work at (520) 515-5246.